**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE CALLS FOR EDUCATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON OWNERSHIP OF SECTIONAL TITLE ESTABLISHMENTS**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 17 August 2021** – The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development today held virtual public hearings on the Sectional Titles Amendment Bill [B31- 2020].

The committee received 76 submissions, three of which were substantive and two who indicated their availability to appear before the committee. Today the committee received presentations from the South African Legal Resources Centre (SALRC), the South African Law Society (SALS) and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development (DALRRD) on the comments and written responses received on the Sectional Titles Amendments Bill.

The committee heard from SALRC that legislation should be pro-poor and should advance equitable access to housing and security of tenure. The committee was also told that the responsibility for education awareness campaigns should fall on government, in order to make potential home owners aware of the responsibilities to maintain building infrastructure and common spaces within communes.

The committee heard that the SALS does not support the proposed amendments, as in some cases potential owners are unable to register their homes and are therefore unable to receive title deeds due to the many challenges during the process of registration, such as receiving the go-ahead from other inhabitants in the buildings.

The committee also realised that there is significant confusion with the Sectional Titles Amendment Bill, which lies with the DALRRD and which relates to registration and existence of sectional titles and the Sectional Titles Schemes Management Act which lies with the Department of Human Settlements.

Many issues raised by members of the public related to management of sectional titles schemes and are thus not relevant to the bill under consideration. The Chairperson, Inkosi Zwelivelile Mandela said, “This calls for an awareness and education campaign to inform both the owners and the public of their rights and responsibilities when taking ownership of housing in sectional titles establishments, so that they are aware of the continual added costs, such as levies, which is required for maintenance of the buildings.”

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, INKOSI ZWELIVELILE MANDELA.**